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POETRY.

THE TRIUMPH OF WOMAN.

In distant times, when barb'rous man
In ceaseless contests warred,
And, crushed by strife's relentless ban,
All social peace was marred;

Woman as umpire interposed,
With plaintive eye rebuked
The sanguine broil. The tumult closed
Strife ceased where'er she—looked.

Or, if some ruthless monster still
Her winning power defied,
With tame submission to her will,
He yielded when she—sighed.

If some crime-fostered son of Cain
The bonds of peace upript,
To strict obedience forced again,
He paused when woman—wept.

When thus she was with victory blest,
Her tears away she brushed;
And, whilst rude man her worth confessed,
With modest pride she—blushed.

Now all entranced he gazed, and spoke
His love in language wild;
Then o'er his heart, to seal her yoke,
With heavenly grace she—smiled.

While thus before man's spell-bound eyes
Charm after charm up-sprung,
He listened with a new surprise,
As, triumph-crowned, she—sang.

No arts such conquests could complete—
'Twas nature's magic all;
'Tis but when woman tries deceit
That man escapes her thrall.

May woman's power continue long,
When by such armour gained!—
By tears, by smiles, by sighs, by song,
Be still her sway maintained!

From Hunt's Merchants' Magazine for Nov. 1840.

THE AMERICAN WHALE FISHERY.

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The prospect of a war with England tended to arouse the fears of the whale fishermen, as they believed that their ships, ranging over so wide a space, would be swept from the ocean. The "Massachusetts Bay Restraining Bill," tending to restrict the commerce of New England, and to exclude their whaling ships from the Banks of Newfoundland, also fell upon this class with a heavy blow, but a special relaxation of the law was made in favor of Nantucket, on account of a petition from the island to that effect. The war of the revolution soon broke out, and although few direct captures were made, most of the ships had opportunity to get safely into port, the consequence was to check the whale fishery, and the class of the population who had procured their livelihood in this perilous traffic, were reduced to the greatest distress.

But great inconveniences resulting from the fact that the commerce of the American whale fishery was cut off from the ocean, the people of Nantucket prayed for an exemption from the attacks of the enemy, and the petition drawn up by Timothy Folger, the agent for the people of Nantucket in 1780, resulted in a partial prosecution of that commerce from this port, but without very profitable results. The whole traffic throughout the country was in fact suspended, and the sailors employed in the whaling business were either driven from the ocean, or earned new laurels in the naval service of the country.

The clouds of the revolution were, however, soon cleared away, and peace again shone bright in the heavens, cheering and fructifying the commerce of the nation. Nantucket, the principal mart of the trade at that time, was found in an impoverished condition. The hundred fifty vessels which it owned at the commencement of the war, were dwindled down to a few old hulks, and the grass

grew green in the streets; but the characteristic energy which had marked the enterprise of its sturdy settlers soon exhibited itself upon its old field, the ocean, and the sound of the broad-axe and the hammer was again heard in its dockyards, building and refitting new vessels for its favorite enterprise. In 1785, the business promised great profits. The articles required for the outfits were low, while the price of oil was high. This state of things continued only a short time, for in the latter part of the succeeding year, crude sperm oil sold for £24 per ton, and head matter scarcely commanded £45. Measures were soon adopted to petition for its protection, and a bounty was granted by the commonwealth of Massachusetts, of five pounds for every ton of white spermaceti oil, and sixty shillings for every ton of brown spermaceti oil; for the purpose of encouraging the business, many persons in other parts of the country were induced to embark in the whale fishery, thus increasing the quantity in this country, and diminishing its value. But the consumption was not sufficiently large to make its procurement very profitable; and the encouragement to this commerce which had been given by England, and the consequent quantity carried by their own mariners into that country, cut off American whaling merchants from British markets, especially as duties were required to be paid for its importation to Great Britain after the war of the revolution.

Another fact tended to injure in great measure the profits of the American whale fishery, which was the establishment of a colony at Halifax by the English government for the purpose of carrying on the trade from that port. This place afforded an excellent harbor that looked out upon the ocean, and it was thought that a good market would be here provided for oil as soon as it was landed. Large inducements were held out to the people of Nantucket to remove to that point, and they were successful, for in 1786 and 1787, we find a considerable number of persons from Nantucket removing to a point opposite Halifax, which they called Dartmouth, and there building dwelling-houses, wharves, spermaceti candle manufactories, stores, and dockyards. Here they carried on the whaling business for several years with success, but were finally induced to remove to Milford Haven, in the west of England, there to prosecute the same traffic. The establishment of Dartmouth was thus broken up. Although Nantucket suffered considerably by this settlements, having lost some of its most active and enterprising whalers, still the auspices of the whale fishery grew brighter, oil advanced in price, the number and size of the ships were increased, their voyages were extended, and the vessels from that port which had confined themselves to the West Indies, the coast of Guinea, and different parts of the shores of North America, now extended their ranging grounds to the banks of Brazil, where right and sperm whales were very numerous. The manufacture of sperm candles was increased, and large quantities were not only consumed in this country, but also exported to the West Indies. About this time the domestic consumption of oil was much extended by the establishment of lighthouses, and the introduction of machinery into the country; one branch of domestic industry thus aiding the other. In fact, the enterprise invested in this labor was enlarged to such a degree, that the little island of Nantucket could not furnish sufficient seamen to carry on the whaling voy-

ages from her own port, and many Indians and negroes were imported from the continent, who resided on that island and became some of the most valuable and active agents of the whale fishery.

In 1790, the attention of the people of Nantucket was directed to the sealing business, from the fact that many very profitable voyages for the capture of these animals had been made from England, and as it was nearly allied to the whale fishery, the seals being found upon the same coasts, requiring the same outfits and men, an expedition was accordingly fitted out from this country for the coast of Africa, which although unsuccessful, laid the foundation of that enterprise which has been since so successfully prosecuted in the United States. During the succeeding year, a number of successful cruises having been made by the English vessels upon the western coast of South America, these foreign enterprises induced the people of Nantucket to range with their ships upon the same coast, and whaling ships then first adventured from this port to the Pacific Ocean, and almost invariably returned with full cargoes. The success of the whalers of Nantucket in the whale fishery induced the people of the neighboring settlement of New Bedford, which has since arrived to great opulence by this traffic, to increase the number of their whaling ships; and in 1792, they had enlarged their adventures to a considerable extent. The market for oil was at this time also very much extended in France; lamps were sent into that country from England, to encourage its use; and large shipments were made from the United States which proved profitable; but the revolution that afterwards broke out in that country, swallowed up all foreign enterprises. The period which the historian of Nantucket has denominated its "golden age," was soon turned to an age of bronze by the circumstances of the period, for while the French revolution effectually prevented the importation of the article into that country, most of the foreign markets became glutted; the price of oil in foreign ports fell below that for which it could be obtained in Nantucket, the provisions required for the outfits advanced in value, and ruin stared the whalers in the face. In addition to these disastrous circumstances, war between France and the United States was expected while the whaling ships afloat were out upon long voyages, and commercial disaster, like the foreboding twilight of an eclipse, overshadowed this important branch of the commerce of the country.

But notwithstanding all the difficulties which followed, we learn that in 1810, most of the business capital of the island of Nantucket was at sea, and during that year, six or eight ships were fitted out from that port for the Pacific Ocean. But dark clouds now gathered again upon the commercial sky, and a war with England was threatened. The people who had been engaged in the traffic were soon deprived of the means of subsistence; and while the motives for adventure in the traffic diminished, the premiums of insurance arose to twenty per cent. Two years afterwards, an embargo was laid upon our commerce, which restriction is generally a sure presage of war. Seven eighths of the capital of Nantucket were afloat, three fourths of which were not expected to return for a year; and so great was the apprehension of the declaration of war, that a formal petition was despatched to the British government by the people of Nantucket, through Admiral

Cochrane, asking protection for their commerce, and expressing a willingness to remain neutral in the belligerent operations which succeeded. But all this was of no avail, and the navigators of that island, diverted from their ancient business, were left to starve or to gain a scanty subsistence by fishing around the coast, or by cultivating its barren soil.

At the close of the war of 1812, the country, it is well known, was involved in one common wreck; but the elastic energies of the nation revived, and the whale fishery was commenced upon a new foundation, and has been advancing with a gradual and solid growth to the present time. During the year 1819, it was extended to many points along the coast of New England; and whale ships were fitted out from New York, Long Island, New London, New Bedford, Cape Cod, and Boston, which have been increasing to the present day, constituting a source of great wealth to the beautiful settlements that are scattered along our northern maritime shores, as monuments of the liberality and enterprise of that high-minded class of men, our American whaling merchants. The growing population of the country, and the increased consumption of the articles produced by the whale fishery from the introduction of machinery, and the multiplied branches of trade requiring them, together with the more efficient organization of this enterprise, and the security to its prosecution furnished by the strength of our government, will render it in coming time, as it now is, a lucrative and permanent field of commerce.

In order to show the progress of the whale fishery from the period which we have mentioned, it may be proper here to state that according to Mr Pitkin, the quantity of sperm oil brought into this country in 1831, was 109,200 barrels, and of common oil, 114,341; and of whalebone, 1,029,690 pounds, the total value being 3,488,632 dollars; that into the single ports of New Bedford and Nantucket, there were brought in the year 1833, 76,631 barrels of sperm oil, 84,596 barrels of common oil, and 729,759 pounds of whalebone; to which when we add the amount brought into the other ports during that year, it equals the sum of 4,046,900 dollars, this enormous sum being the product of our domestic industry in that department for one year. Mr Pitkin, who is doubtless a good authority, states that the whole number of vessels engaged in the whale fishery in 1834, was four hundred and thirty-four, the greater part of which belonged to New Bedford, Nantucket and New London, whose aggregate value was ten millions one hundred and thirty thousand dollars, and employing not less than ten thousand nine hundred men. From the same source, we learn that at this time, about one half of the common whale oil found a market in Europe, one quarter in the West Indies, and the other quarter was consumed in the United States. The spermaceti oil imported, is consumed mainly in the United States, from a quarter to a third being used in the cotton and woollen manufactories, and a considerable portion in the engines of our steamboats, and by other kinds of machinery. This consumption, however, would be much greater, had not gas-lights been introduced into our larger cities as a substitute for oil.

The outfits required for a whaling ship constitute no inconsiderable item of the expense, amounting in a vessel which is fitted out for a three years' voyage, to no